

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-16 are present in this application. By this Amendment, the specification and claims 1, 3-5, 7 and 13 have been amended, and claim 16 has been added. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a). Applicants respectfully disagree with this objection. With regard to the speaker type, the “dynamic electricity type of speaker” and the “piezoelectric type of speaker” correspond to the speaker unit 26 described in the specification and illustrated in the drawings. Indeed, the different types of speaker units are similarly illustrated. Moreover, the “vibration mass” corresponds to a vibration mass of the speaker unit 26 described in the specification and shown in the drawings. That is, the noted “vibration mass” is merely the speaker mass that is subject to vibration. Additionally, the “acoustic mass” corresponds to an acoustic mass of a support member 20 as described in the specification and shown in the drawings. The “acoustic mass” is thus embodied in the structure of the support member 20. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

The disclosure and claim 13 were objected to due to a number of informalities. The informalities have been corrected herein. Withdrawal of the objections is requested.

Claims 9 and 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. As discussed above, the “acoustic mass” of the support member 20 is embodied by the structure of the support member as would be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. Similarly, the “vibration mass” of the speaker references the speaker structure that is subject to vibration as would also be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. With regard to the “distance between the speaker unit and the aperture port,” such distance is indeed shown in the drawings - see, for example, a distance along the support member between the speaker unit 26 and the aperture port 21 in

Fig. 3 - and is described in the specification at, for example, page 5, lines 24-28. Those of ordinary skill in the art would readily appreciate this structure in view of the description and drawings. See also, page 5, line 34 - page 6, line 3.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The claims have been amended herein to address the specific points raised by the Examiner. Applicants submit that the claims now more clearly satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 2,872,516 to Hoffman. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Hoffman describes an acoustic speaker assembly incorporating a partition panel (34, 76) within a speaker cabinet 10 for functioning as a horn so that sound is emitted from the side of the speaker cabinet 10. See, for example, column 4, lines 26-51. Two symmetrical horn assemblies meet at the rear of the speaker assembly, and sound waves traveling through the horn are in phase by reason of the symmetry of the system. In contrast, claim 1 recites that a support member functions as an acoustic pipe. As an acoustic pipe, a pipe resonance is caused by the support member where a resonance frequency of the pipe resonance is based on a length of the acoustic pipe.

The Office Action vaguely references a “pedestal” in the Hoffman patent by drawing a ‘P’ with a reference line pointing to a top of the speaker cabinet 10. With regard to the claimed hollow-shaped support member, the Office Action draws in reference ‘S’ in Fig. 2 of the Hoffman patent, which in fact is merely a hollow opening between a front panel of the speaker cabinet 10 and a vertical panel 72. The vertical panel 72 defines sidewalls of the horn

cooperatively with adjacent panels 24. See column 4, lines 18-22. Applicants submit that this area designated 'S' does not in any manner function as an acoustic pipe or an acoustic capacity, and the Office Action in fact fails to reference any support in the Hoffman patent that supports such a conclusion.

Still further, claims 1 and 3 define a speaker unit equipped with a speaker and being attached on the support member. Even assuming the Office Action's arbitrary reference to a "support member(s)," it is clear in Fig. 2 of the Hoffman patent that no such speaker unit is attached on the alleged support member.

Still further, the Hoffman patent defines an acoustic speaker assembly, which may be distinguished from a speaker-provided mounting table according to the present invention. In an effort to more clearly distinguish this concept, claims 1 and 3 have been amended to clarify that the speaker unit is independent of the pedestal. Using the Office Action's characterization of Fig. 2 from the Hoffman patent, the "pedestal P" is in fact part of the speaker cabinet 10 as noted above. The cabinet forms part of the speaker unit, and Applicants submit that the Hoffman patent additionally lacks a speaker unit that is independent of a pedestal.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is misplaced. With regard to the dependent claims, Applicants submit that these claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on an allowable independent claim.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 6-8, 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hoffman in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,710,395 to Wilke. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Wilke patent describes a speaker system of bass reflex type that utilizes a Helmholtz resonance in which a resonance tube 70 is provided in a speaker housing 10. This resonance

tube 70, however, does not in any manner form part of a support member for supporting a pedestal. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that the Wilke patent does not correct the deficiencies noted above with regard to Hoffman. Consequently, Applicants submit that these dependent claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on an allowable independent claim.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 16 has been added and similarly defines a hollow-shaped support member functioning as an acoustic pipe and as an acoustic capacity associating with the acoustic pipe. For reasons similar to those discussed above, Applicants submit that claim 16 is also distinguishable from the references of record.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are patentable over the art of record and that the application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

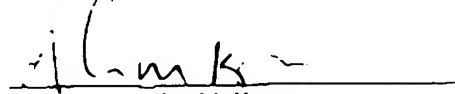
Prompt passage to issuance is earnestly solicited.

MAEKAWA et al
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Respectfully submitted,

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